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# OUR WAR WITH GERMANY

## XVIII

August 6—August 30.

THE seventeenth month of our war with Germany has been a period of sustained battle, as was the sixteenth, and, also like that one, a month of glorious and successful action. But there has been the difference that during this month the great burden of the fighting has fallen upon our British and French Allies, and our own men have been resting comparatively quietly along the line of the Vesle river, in the positions they had won just as the previous month closed. Battle it has been, every day, and more, vastly more. For the Allies it has been a marvel beyond praise, and, for the Germans, a demonstration of incalculable bitterness. For the initiative that had rested with the German High Command throughout four years of war, to be snatched from them by General Foch at length, at the very time when their need for it was greatest, has been used by the Allied Commander-in-Chief in the most masterly exhibition of military skill produced during the whole period of the war.

Day by day, with unvaried regularity and unrelaxed vigor, Marshal Foch has sent his veterans forward to new triumphs over their old enemy. Now here, now there, he has struck, sometimes with a spear-head thrust on a narrow front, sometimes on a front of ten miles, and once or twice on an extended front of between fifty and sixty miles. One French army one day, and one British army the next, delivered the blow. Then a British and a French army struck together, or two British, or two French armies smashed savagely at the amazed and bewildered Germans. And then, when the occasion suited his superb strategy, Marshal Foch sent in his divisions and armies all together, as if to demonstrate again to the German High Command how badly it had erred in the belief that France was "bled white."

It has been a new, and terribly bitter experience to the German armies. During all the years of war they have been accustomed to fight when they were ready, and where they chose. They had built up a colossal contempt for their enemy, and their earlier experiences of this year tended to confirm them in it. When, occasionally, and for a brief period, either the British or the French struck back at them, it was comparatively easy, on their interior lines, and with their highly developed system of transportation, to transfer reserves speedily to the point where they were needed, and thus to maintain the numerical preponderance that gave them superiority.

But once Marshal Foch found himself in position to take the initiative,—and the presence of our men on the fighting line placed

him there,—a new and very serious phase of the war opened for the Germans. Their day of easy arrogance and contemptuous superiority is gone. They fight, now, whether they are thoroughly prepared or caught by surprise—or else they surrender or run away. The action comes where Marshal Foch—not Hindenburg or Ludendorff, not the German Crown Prince or Rupprecht of Bavaria—chooses. The action is timed to suit the will of the Allied Commander-in-Chief, to comport with conditions in his army. And during most of this month it has been growing more and more inconvenient for the Germans. Their violent offensive of the Spring used up a good many of their divisions. Reserves are not so numerous and fresh as they were. Sudden shifting of them from point to point, despite the advantage of interior lines, is more and more hazardous. Moreover, Marshal Foch strikes with such rapidity, and at such widely varied points, that it is increasingly difficult for the Germans to be sure that they are not moving their reserves from the very place where they will be most needed as soon as they have gone. Every day has added proof of the value of the unity of command achieved by the Allies when Marshal Foch was selected as Commander-in-Chief of their armies.

When this seventeenth month opened, on August 6th, the Franco-American forces had just completed driving the Germans back from the Marne, out of the Soissons-Rheims salient, to the line of the Vesle. From Soissons to Ypres the line then ran very much as it did at the close of the second German drive last Spring, with Montdidier in possession of the Germans and their westernmost forces menacing Amiens. General Foch had been promoted to be a Marshal of France in recognition of his brilliant and successful work since assuming the offensive about the middle of July.

As the French and Americans settled down in their new positions along the Vesle the British came sharply into action along their portion of the line. This was distinctly contrary to precedent. Always theretofore after a period of such severe fighting as had marked the repulsion of the Germans from the Marne salient, there had followed a comfortable spell of pleasant weather, so to speak, when rest might be had and needed repairs be looked out for. But the British had had their rest. During all the fighting accompanying the expulsion of the Germans from the Soissons-Rheims salient they had remained interested, but quiet, onlookers, and they had needed that respite, after the heavy work they had done during the violent German offensives of the Spring. Now, with recuperated divisions, and with strong reinforcements, Field Marshal Haig was ready for more fighting. The German Crown Prince had had his troubles and the turn of Rupprecht of Bavaria had arrived.

On August 7 Field Marshal Haig struck sharply at Rupprecht's armies on the Lys salient, east of Amiens, and made substantial gains. This attack was on a front of only five miles, and after what had been going on further south it was easily mistaken as an indication that further fighting would be confined to local efforts. But the next day British and French together surprised the Germans by surging forward on a 25-mile front. The Allied line was pushed forward some seven miles, and more than 10,000 prisoners, with 100 guns, were captured. Again the next day the advance continued. This time Haig's men

drove ahead east of Amiens, and straightened out their line from a point just south of Albert to another north of Montdidier.

On August 9 the Allies swept forward once more, gaining five miles below the Somme and raising the captures to 17,000 men and more than 200 guns. Next day the report came that the Somme salient had been smashed and Montdidier retaken. Commenting on the situation, General March, the American Chief-of-Staff, said:

"This is the time for the greatest effort. Keep the enemy running. Never give him a chance to recuperate or think it over. Now is the time to hit hard."

Next day the British reported the capture of 24,000 prisoners since August 8. The guns taken numbered nearly 400. The Allied casualties were reported to be less than one-fourth of the total of their prisoners. Eleven German divisions were smashed in three days of this work.

On the 11th the Americans on the line of the Vesle had a little diversion through an assault by the Germans, apparently with the purpose of keeping our men from striking in aid of their Allies in the drive on the Somme. The Allied advance this day covered four miles, and the toll of prisoners rose to 36,000, and of guns to 500.

So it went on. One day was like another in result, with only the difference in the mounting total of captures, and in the new names of villages, towns and cities taken from the Germans. On August 13 Paris announced that since the beginning of the Allied counter-offensive, on July 18, they had taken more than 70,000 prisoners, 1,000 guns and over 10,000 machine guns. On the 15th the French occupied Ribecourt and the British moved ahead north of Albert. Two days later Foch won the plateau west of Soissons, pushing his men close up to Roye and Lassigny. On the 20th the French took 8,000 prisoners and recaptured eight towns. Next day they reoccupied Lassigny and redeemed twenty other towns. The British above Albert swept across the railway and took seven towns.

On the 22nd the British took Albert with 5,000 prisoners. Two days later they recaptured Bray and five other towns with 16,000 prisoners and many guns. On the 27th Foch varied his tactics and struck on a line 57 miles long. French and British together surged ahead. That day the French took Roye, and the next day they were in Chaulnes again. Forty other towns also were redeemed from German occupation. The month closes with the French once more in possession of Noyon and the British back again in Bapaume, the original capture of which by them, in 1916, preceded the famous "strategic retreat" of Hindenburg.

Accompanying this advance was a new spurt in which Americans had a part. Working with French troops they advanced upon the Juvigny plateau, which is the key to the Chemin des Dames position, and at this writing the prospect is that the Germans will soon be forced back, perhaps even beyond the lines they held at the opening of the fighting last Spring.

The American force in France is rapidly assuming proportions that will enable it to undertake independent work. Already the first American field army has been organized, consisting of at least five army corps, and commanded by General Pershing himself. Its exact

size is not announced, but it is known that each corps numbers more than 60,000 men, so that the army has over 300,000 effective troops. The character of the fighting shown by the Americans in their work on the Soissons-Rheims salient gives ample promise of accomplishment when the time comes for the full force to be exerted. In his order of the day to the American troops participating in that fighting General Mangin, who commanded them, said:

"You ran to it like going to a feast. Your magnificent dash upset and surprised the enemy, and your indomitable tenacity stopped counter-attacks by his fresh divisions. You have shown yourselves to be worthy sons of your great country. I am grateful to you for the blood you generously spilled upon the soil of my country. I am proud to have fought with you for the deliverance of the world."

The organization of the first field army was the first step toward coördination of all the American forces in France. Other armies will be organized as troops in increasing numbers are sent over, but the troops now brigaded with the French and British will not be immediately withdrawn.

The sending of American troops overseas proceeded during the month with practically the same speed that had marked the work of the previous months. And as the month closes the Administration Man-Power bill, extending the draft ages so as to take all men between 18 and 45 goes to the President for his signature. Already General Crowder, the Provost-Marshall General, has completed the plans for registering something like thirteen millions of men who will come under the provisions of the new law, and the registration will take place before the middle of September.

The Senate and House were embarked upon their summer recess agreements, under which no work was to be done in the Senate until August 19 and in the House until the 26th, when the Administration submitted the draft of its Man-Power bill. Immediately the two committees on Military Affairs began consideration of the measure and at once there developed certain objection to the proposition to lower the ages so as to take boys of 18 and 19. Despite the arguments of the Provost Marshal General that only by taking boys of such ages could the requisite number of soldiers be sent to France, arguments which he supported by carefully prepared figures of the numbers reasonably expected to be raised from each of the several different classes, several members of each branch of Congress, who have been consistent malingerers in war work continued to endeavor to have the bill amended. And when they found that could not be accomplished they sought to achieve the same purpose by trying to secure a provision that the boys of 18 and 19 should not be called for service until the other classes had been exhausted.

On August 7 General March, Chief of Staff, appeared before the Senate Committee in support of the bill. He spoke of a plan ultimately to have a great reservoir of American troops backing Marshal Foch, at least 4,000,000 in France and another million in the United States. He told the Senators that the plan of the War Department contemplates the steady shipment of 250,000 men per month overseas.

"The policy of the Department," he said, "is to put the maximum number of men in France with the idea of shortening the war."

The programme as he explained it calls for eighty divisions in France and eighteen additional divisions in the United States. Those for France are to be abroad by June 30, 1919. That proposes more than 3,500,000 American troops in France by the middle of next summer, estimating 45,000 men to a division. General March said he expects to have all the men provided by the proposed changes in the draft ages in service abroad by next summer.

"The President has announced that the American military policy from this time on is centered on the western front," said General March, "and we have declined to be diverted from that one thing. The purpose of the United States is to furnish enough man power to whip the Germans from now on. The only way that Germany can be whipped is by America going into this thing with her whole strength. It is up to us to win the war, and we can win. If we drag along and put a small force over there we shall be playing Germany's game. It is my belief that with an American army of 4,000,000 men in France, under one commander-in-chief, we can go through the German line whenever we please."

Secretary Baker also appeared before the Senate Committee in support of the bill. He explained that he had been against the inclusion of boys of 18, but was convinced that it was necessary to take them. He also said our policy was to end the war on the western front. "The United States will concentrate its military effort on the western front," he said, "including the Italian front as part of the western front. We must force the issue and win it on that front."

On August 17 General March announced that 1,450,000 Americans had been embarked for overseas service. He had told the Military Affairs Committee of the Senate in January that our programme called for 1,500,000 men in France by the end of this year. His new announcement showed that the programme had been anticipated by more than four months. Some of our men are in Flanders, the great majority of them in France, some in Italy and some at Vladivostok, Archangel and other places in European Russia. The embarkation continues at the rate of between 8,000 and 10,000 a day. This means another million, or 2,500,000 in all, this year, and is full of promise for the fulfillment of General March's estimate of 3,500,000 American troops in France by June 30 next.

Appearing with Secretary Baker before the House Committee on Military Affairs on August 19, General March said that the total strength of the American army on August 1 was 3,012,112 men. Asked if we should be able to supply the vast army planned to have in France next June, General March replied: "There is no fear on that score. We have the assurance that American shipping will be able to take care of all the transportation by next April."

In his testimony before the House Committee, Secretary Baker said: "There are two ways of fighting this war. One is to make every possible effort to win quickly, and the other is to proceed leisurely and win it late. Financial, economic and other considerations all induce us to put forth every effort to win it quickly. The first consideration is to obtain a maximum army."

The Man-Power bill was reported to the House on August 21, and passed on August 24 by a vote of 336 to 2, all efforts to

amend it unsatisfactorily to the Administration having been defeated. It passed the Senate on August 27 with 75 votes for it and none against.

There were several indications during the month that the prospects for American shipping to which General March referred were well founded. The first launching at the great Government fabricating yard at Hog Island occurred on August 5, in the presence of President Wilson, the officials of the Shipping Board and a vast throng of interested spectators. Mrs. Wilson, wife of the President, christened the ship.

The Shipping Board's reports of launchings for July showed 67 steel vessels, 53 of wood and 3 composite sent into the water, their aggregate tonnage being 631,944 dead weight. In the same time 41 vessels, of dead weight tonnage of 235,025, were completed and delivered, 36 steel and 5 wood. This did not include two steel vessels of 15,855 tons delivered by Japan. In the last four days of July 12 steel and 4 wooden vessels were launched, aggregating 80,130 tons dead weight.

The first year of the present Shipping Board ended with the opening of this month. In that time there were completed and delivered 37 contract steel vessels aggregating 245,000 tons, dead weight, and 210 requisitioned vessels of 1,326,156 dead weight tonnage. About half, aggregating 775,545 tons, were delivered in the last three months. The total of launchings for the first seven months of this year was 1,719,536 dead weight tons. More than a third of this tonnage was launched in the last month. More tonnage was launched in July than was ever built by American yards in a year before. One 3,500-ton steel freighter was launched in 14 days after the keel was laid; completed and fitted in 15 days more and delivered on the 30th day. These were working days of one eight-hour shift.

Mr. Hurley, chairman of the Shipping Board, cabled some of the features of the shipbuilding record to General Pershing, telling him of the launching of the 12,000-ton freighter *Invincible* 24 days after keel laying. General Pershing replied that the news had been published to the forces. It "thrills every American in France. Well done!" he said.

While our shipyards were turning out new tonnage with ever-increasing rapidity, and our soldiers were streaming over to France and England at a rate far beyond anything ever dreamed of as possible in military transportation heretofore, German submarines continued to operate with more or less activity all along the coast, from Canadian waters as far south as the Virginia Capes. Now and then they succeeded in sinking a steamer, usually a tanker. But for the most part their game was sailing vessels, chiefly fishing schooners. The scene of their activity constantly shifted, naturally, and once or twice they showed some boldness, approaching the entrance of New York harbor on one occasion, and then signaling their valor by attacking the Diamond Shoals Light Ship, off Cape Hatteras.

They captured the steam trawler *Triumph*, on the Western Banks, put a crew of sixteen men aboard her and raided the fishing fleet, sinking a number of schooners and setting their crews adrift in dories to row fifty or sixty miles ashore. Throughout the month navy patrols

were active in searching for submarines, and aircraft joined in the hunt. But no reports of success were made by the Navy Department.

On August 20 the Department received a report from the captain of an American steamer that on the 17th, in the neighborhood of Winter Quarter Shoals, he was attacked by a submarine which he succeeded in ramming on the port bow. That brought the submarine alongside, and her crew shouted that they were friends. But they had a strong German accent, and the captain told them they were no friends of his and steamed away, leaving them to sink or save themselves as best they could. On August 19 a British tanker at Philadelphia reported having been in a running fight with a submarine 300 miles northeast of Nantucket. The tanker, which was hit twice, fired 27 shots and was certain she had sunk the submarine.

The airplane scandal came to the front again during this month, through the filing by the subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs of its report on the investigation it has been making into the whole subject of airplane production. This report was filed with the Senate on August 22, six days after the publication of a cable despatch from General Pershing announcing the first flight by a squadron of American-built machines. Eighteen De Haviland fours, equipped with Liberty motors, were in the squadron. They made a successful reconnaissance behind the German lines and all returned safely to the base.

The report of the subcommittee charges incompetency in handling the aircraft production programme; failure to adopt successful European airplane types; reckless endangering of life; huge profits to manufacturers, and practical control of the aircraft programme by automobile men who were without experience in aircraft work. The report asserts that the \$640,000,000 originally appropriated for aircraft production was practically wasted. While we have been raising an army of 3,000,000 men, only 67 De Haviland planes had reached France by the middle of this year. Although two months after war was declared it was announced that we should have 25,000 planes, "not a single American-made combat plane is on the battle front. Not a single American-made heavy bombing plane is on the battle front. We have not developed and put in production a successful fighting plane."

The evidence taken by the committee—or part of it—was made public after the report was filed, and after a confidential report had been delivered to Secretary Baker. Mr. Ryan, who was made director of aircraft production a few months ago in the effort to overcome the conditions then so sharply criticised, told the committee that the Liberty motor was too powerful for the Bristol plane, and he had stopped production of the Bristol. General Kenly, Chief of Military Aeronautics, testified that the whole thing was "a jumble"; that we have 3,000 American pilots in France, but only 273 of them are working in American machines.

On August 27 Mr. Ryan was appointed Second Assistant Secretary of War and Director of Air Service, in a further effort to improve production conditions. And the Postal Censorship Board forbade the sending abroad of any newspapers or other publications containing reports of or comment upon the Senate Committee's report.

Conditions in Russia continued uncertain, confused and full of



menace throughout the month. American troops took part in the Allied landing at Archangel on August 7th, and were greeted with enthusiasm by the North Russians. The next day it was announced at Washington that Major General William S. Graves had been appointed to command the Siberian Expedition. The American force, it was explained, would number about 7,000 men, chiefly from the Philippines. Since then the 27th and 31st infantry regiments have reached Vladivostok from Manila. On August 6th news despatches reported Lenine, the Bolshevik Premier, as threatening to declare war against Japan, "notwithstanding the people are opposed to any war." The same day Count Terauchi, the Japanese Premier, announced the intention of the Japanese Government to support the Czecho-Slovak army in Siberia as needed. Despatches from Kandalaska, Lapland, reported the proclamation of the Government of the Country of the North, at Archangel, and declared the Bolshevik régime ended in that region. The new government is composed of members of the Constituent Assembly and of the Zemstvos of that district. It aims at the regeneration of Russia and the resumption of relations with other governments; the defense of the nation against all territorial violation; reunion with Russia of the peoples who have been taken from her; re-establishment of the Constituent Assembly, Municipal Dumas and Zemstvos; re-establishment of legal order and of religious and political liberty; security of the rights of agricultural workers and defense of the economic interests of Russia.

Early in the month there were reports that Lenine had declared war against Great Britain. The Russian ambassador in Berlin said it was "not true that we have actually declared war on Great Britain, but we are fighting against the English invaders." The next day Tokyo announced the appointment of General Otani to command the Japanese force in Siberia. On August 12 came reports that Lenine and Trotzky had fled from Moscow and taken refuge in Kronstadt. They were afraid of the growth of the Czecho-Slovak movement and of the disruption of Soviet authority. The German Embassy fled from Moscow to Pskov.

On August 13 the British Government recognized the Czecho-Slovaks as an allied nation and "the right of the Czecho-Slovak national council as the supreme organ of the Czecho-Slovak national interests and as the present trustee of the future Czecho-Slovak government to exercise supreme authority over this allied and belligerent army." France and Italy took similar action.

Official reports received at Washington toward the close of the month show that some time after the departure of the Entente Ambassadors from Vologda the Bolshevik authorities in Moscow arrested some of the Entente consular representatives, and Lenine made threats of declaring war on the Entente Powers. The Allied diplomatic representatives in Moscow thereupon sent a collective note to Tchitcherin, the Bolshevik Foreign Commissary, demanding to know what was meant by Lenine's threats. Tchitcherin replied that it was not a declaration of war but rather of a state of defense. But later a despatch was received from Mr. Poole, the American Consul General at Moscow, in which he reported that on receiving notice of Lenine's declaration he had destroyed all his records, code books, and confi-

dential papers and had turned American interests over to the Swedish Consul General preparatory to his own withdrawal. And on August 22 the State Department received a despatch from Vice-Consul Imbrie, at Petrograd, dated and filed August 2, reporting that on that day he had been notified by the Bolshevik government that a "state of war" existed between the two governments. Thereupon he hauled down the American flag on the consulate, turned over American interests to the representative of Norway and advised all of the twenty Americans in Petrograd to leave. From all of which it appears that despite the care of the Entente governments, and especially of our own, to avoid a rupture with the Bolsheviks, it has come, and Allied intervention in Russia is none too soon.

While these reports were coming in others brought news of the arrival of a force of British troops at Baku, the great oil port of the Caucasus. They had journeyed across Persia from Bagdad. Another British force from India had crossed Baluchistan and Eastern Persia and reached Turkestan, being joined by forces of Turcomans and Bokharans who are fighting the Bolshevik. A Japanese contingent has joined the British and French at Vladivostok and the Japanese are acting in Manchuria in agreement with the Chinese.

Just at the close of the month a new indication of the increase of our forces abroad comes in a request from the Fuel Administration for conservation of gasoline by refraining from the use of automobiles on Sundays.

*(This record is as of August 30 and is to be continued)*